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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses issues regarding the continuum of teacher preparation, particularly related to the alignment between degree programs in institutions of higher education and the professional growth of teachers. Guided by interviews with faculty at institutions that are aligning their master's degrees with National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) standards, the paper presents an overview of the range of approaches taken, issues in higher education that facilitate or impede the process, and the role and impact of state policies. The paper argues for using benchmarking strategies rather than template approaches in redesigning master's programs for accomplished teachers. One underlying theme is whether or not master's degree programs that are being developed to respond to the system of national certification incorporate knowledge of practice in which practitioners believe. The paper examines a small number of programs, addressing the process and specific elements of their design, issues of faculty development and implementation, and evaluation of the programs and process. Finally, the paper poses questions and issues that faculties of education engaged in this process should consider. (Contains 22 references.) (SM)

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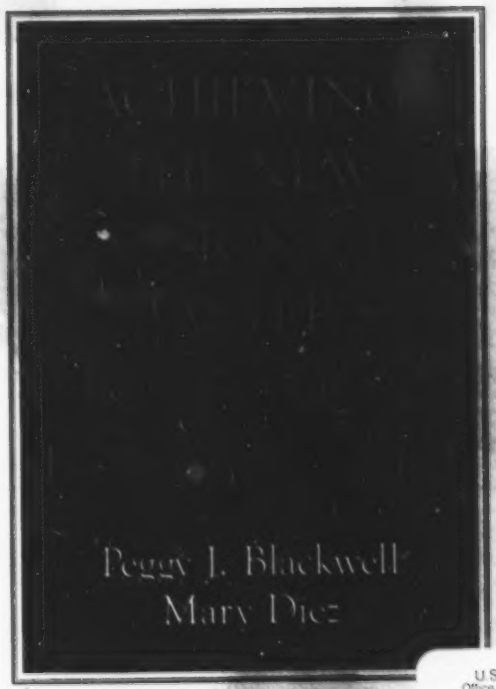

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Achieving the New Vision of Master's Education for Teachers

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National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

NCATE/NBPTS Partnership for Graduate Programs

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Preface

New emphasis on student and teacher performance is profoundly influencing the ways that teachers are selected, prepared, licensed, and recognized. Policymakers now expect teachers and teacher candidates to show evidence of knowledge and skill and the ability to apply them to teach effectively.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has accomplished groundbreaking work in the development of standards for effective teaching in specific subject areas, and assessments geared to measure teacher performance against the standards. The National Board's standards contain a vision of accomplished teaching that can become a framework for the redesign of advanced teacher development programs in universities.

NCATE is working in collaboration with the National Board to help institutions modify advanced programs so that they are aligned with NBPTS propositions for accomplished practice. The work is part of the National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching (NPEAT), established by the U.S. Department of Education as a collaborative effort to enhance quality in teaching and teacher preparation.

The NCATE/NBPTS partnership encourages schools of education to develop standards-based master's degree programs that are designed to help teachers improve their practice and develop the tools to better assess their own effectiveness. Unlike many current master's degree programs that focus on process, the revised master's programs will be geared specifically to improving the art of teaching, which in turn will aid student learning.

The project draws school personnel into partnerships with institutions of higher education, creating new higher education and school faculty roles, new opportunities for research, and new structures within the school, college, or department of education and the P-12 school.

There is currently no one best way for higher education institutions to align their advanced master's degree programs with NBPTS standards. Nor are there comprehensive models from which to learn what works best. As more institutions develop their own models and share their successes and experiences, many institutions will be able to draw from an expanding knowledge base.

Institutions must consider various sets of standards—standards for students, preservice preparation, licensure, and advanced certification—when creating new advanced master's degree programs for teachers. Alignment among these standards is vital to the success of institutions' efforts to improve the quality of teacher education.

In *Achieving the New Vision of Master's Education for Teachers*, Peggy Blackwell and Mary Diez discuss the issues of the continuum of teacher preparation, particularly with regard to the alignment between degree programs in institutions of higher education and the professional growth of teachers. Guided by interviews with faculty at institutions that are aligning their master's degrees with National Board standards, Diez and Blackwell present an overview of the range of approaches taken, issues in higher education that facilitate or impede the process, and the role and impact of state policies. The authors offer a compelling argument for the use of benchmarking strategies (instead of template approaches) in the redesign of master's programs for accomplished teachers.

Boyce C. Williams, Vice President for Institutional Relations, NCATE

Jane Leibbrand, Vice President for Communications, NCATE

Editors

Introduction

In 1998, as part of a project sponsored by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), we provided background for thinking through a new approach to master's education for practicing teachers. The current paper, developed to follow up on those ideas, is based on interviews with institutions that report initial efforts to align their programs and curriculum with National Board standards and processes while working toward a higher quality master's degree program. We contacted 35 institutions, all of which were entered on a listing on the NBPTS website for institutions with such efforts underway. Not all responded. Of those that did, not all were involved in rethinking master's degree programs. Some have limited their activities to creating support programs, most often non-degree, for National Board candidates; we have not included information from those institutions in our current paper.

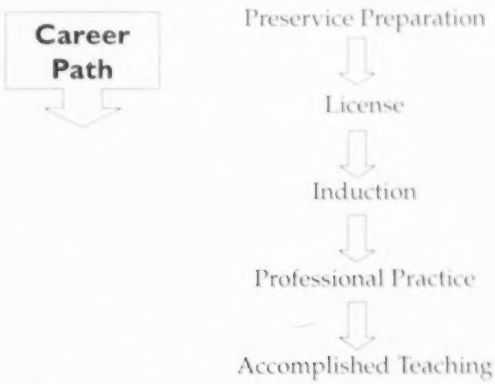
This paper discusses in greater depth the issues of the continuum of teacher preparation, particularly with regard to the alignment between degree programs in institutions of higher education and the professional growth of teachers. One underlying theme of the paper is whether—or not—master's degree programs that are being developed to respond in some way to the system of national certification incorporate "knowledge of practice in which practitioners *believe*" (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988, p. 354). Clifford and Guthrie assert that if that is to happen, schools, colleges, and departments of education (SCDEs) must "alter their offerings, requirements, and instructional performance" (p. 354). The paper then explores the use of a template approach to responding to national certification in contrast with use of a benchmark approach, and postulates how redesign of master's programs requires a benchmarking strategy. Next, we discuss what we learned about approaches now underway, from those SCDEs just beginning to think about the new vision of a master's degree to those that are fairly far along in the process. This discussion covers the range of approaches taken, issues within higher education that either facilitate or impede the process, and the role and impact of state policies. Next, we examine closely a small number of programs, addressing the process and specific elements of their design, issues of faculty development and implementation, and evaluation of the programs and process. Finally, as we did in the first paper, we pose questions and issues we believe deserve additional consideration by faculties of education engaged in this process, beyond what can be developed in this paper. We have integrated the six

criteria previously developed (Blackwell & Diez, 1998) that are prerequisites for high quality master's degree programs throughout the paper.

Issues to Guide Discussion of the Advanced Master's Degree

Continuum of Professional Growth. The continuum of teacher preparation pictured in Figure 1 illustrates the emerging sense among policy makers of essential stages of teacher development. First, NCATE, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, sets forth standards to guide the work of institutions that prepare teacher candidates, whether in four-year baccalaureate programs, five-year or fifth-year programs leading to the Master's of Arts in Teaching (MAT), or other variations. NCATE standards also guide the implementation of advanced degree programs, including the master's designed for experienced teachers and other school personnel. Second, INTASC, the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, brings together nearly 40 states in the design of standards and assessments focused on the teacher in the first few years of practice. Third, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards provides a vision of accomplished teaching across developmental levels of students and subject matter areas for experienced teachers.

Figure 1. Continuum of professional preparation and practice



The continuum of teacher preparation suggests different expectations for candidates, beginning teachers, and accomplished teachers, along a developmental path that continues through the professional career of the teacher. These relationships are depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2. The continuum of professional preparation and practice as aligned with state and national practice standards

What is the relationship between this continuum of professional preparation and another continuum—that of formal education and degrees? An expeditious analysis suggests little congruence between the two. As Feiman-Nemser states, "Teacher educators are fond of talking about a 'preservice-inservice' continuum, but no coherent system of teacher preparation and continuing professional development exists" (1999, p. 3). For most teachers, the baccalaureate degree provides a structured entry into teaching. In contrast, ongoing professional development has been marked by little structure (Osterman & Kottkamp, 1993).

Even if a teacher completes a master's degree, it may not have been in a thoughtful, coherent program that contributes in a structured, explicit way to the teacher's ongoing professional development. If teachers have not earned a master's degree or have already earned a master's, their ongoing professional development is most likely to be offered by schools, private vendors, or school districts, and less likely to be offered by institutions of higher education (IHE). In the latter case, many IHEs relegate professional development to units of continuing education in non-degree or CEU classes that are often slapdash in character. Recent literature regarding the quality of professional development reveals that it has been offered most often with a focus on content, topic, or strategy *du jour* (Lewis, 1997; Lieberman, 1995; Little, 1987). Little if any attention has been paid to guiding the professional development of the practitioner in a systematic and planned manner (Feiman-Nemser, 1999).

The fourth proposition of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards—"Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience"—suggests three critical factors for the design of new types of master's programs that aim to guide teacher development along the professional continuum. Based on the assumption that teachers as professionals continue to learn and grow throughout their career, advanced programs for teacher development benchmarked against the National Board standards and processes would both contribute to teacher development and strengthen teachers' abilities to continue to learn. Thus, developing the abilities assessed by the National Board process—systematic inquiry into practice, reflection on practice, and collaboration with others in meeting learners' needs—should be a primary focus in advanced master's education; these abilities serve as benchmarks for faculty who seek to use them in the design or evaluation of a master's program.

It is interesting to note that in our interviews of faculty who work collaboratively with teachers, these same abilities emerged as key to teachers' growth, both in programs to support candidates for National Board certification as well as in advanced master's programs benchmarked to National Board standards and processes. Specifically, our interviews indicated the need for assistance for teachers to think reflectively about practice; this need was made concrete in reported weaknesses in analytic reading and writing (Foxworth, 1998; Tompkins, 1999). The interviews linked the need for systematic study of practice with the need to learn how to use and construct authentic assessment instruments for gauging student performance. Less frequently mentioned, but still clearly evident in the interviews, was a call for assisting teachers to learn to work more collaboratively. (We suspect it was not mentioned as often because the need is less recognized among higher education faculty than even among K-12 teachers.)

These three abilities—reflection, systematic inquiry, and collaboration—are at the heart of teacher growth. They create an integrated learning process for the practicing teacher. The teacher's development is enhanced by disciplined and purposeful reflection on practice. Sources for reflection can include one's own philosophy of education, professional reading and input from other professionals at conferences, discourse with colleagues, and concerns about student performance. Reflection, particularly raising questions, can lead to action research or other forms of systematic inquiry designed to seek answers to the questions, often with the collaboration of others, including other professionals, community persons, parents, and students (Schon, 1987). That process, again, leads to and is consolidated in reflection.

How might the master's degree be seen as a vehicle for guiding and recognizing teacher development? Figure 3 depicts the disconnect between current policy/practice and the goal of making the master's degree a meaningful factor in the professional development of the teacher, while Figure 4 illustrates the several ways the master's is used at various stages of the career path. As programs have moved preservice preparation to the fifth year, they have attached master's level status to it. Yet the teacher who completes such a degree is at the beginning of professional life. A fundamental question about the purpose of the master's degree is raised when it is used as an extension of the baccalaureate for the purpose of licensure or the first year of induction. The suggestion, then, of an *advanced* master's is one way to provide some coherence between the continuum of teacher development and the continuum of academic degrees.

Figure 3. The continuum of professional preparation, practice, state and national practice standards "aligned" with degree programs and non-degree professional development

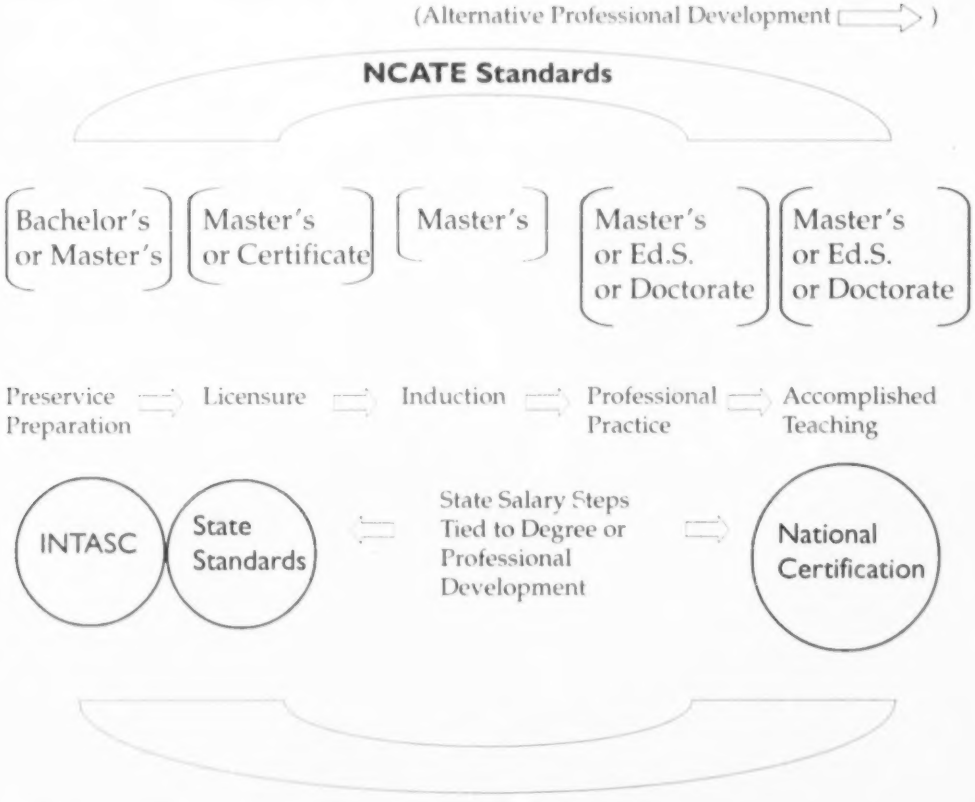


Figure 4. Multiple uses of the master's degree

Template vs. Benchmark Issues. In our previous paper (Blackwell & Diez, 1998), we addressed the issue of how National Board standards and processes might be used in the design of a high quality advanced master's program for professionals in the classroom. We revisit that discussion here to focus on two issues that have emerged in our study of programs self-identified as linked to the National Board—the use of assessment for teacher development and the authentic redesign of programs.

Assessment for Development. The goal of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is to recognize accomplished teachers through rigorous assessment processes representing standards that integrate subject area knowledge with the developmental level of the learner. The National Board's processes and assessments also have the potential to improve teaching practice—good teachers who undertake the process of assessment can learn and grow whether or not they attempt or achieve Board certification. The source of their growth is in the use of the assessments to study their practice in a systematic way and in the use of reflection on practice in relationship to standards to guide their decision making.

Using the specific exercises for the National Board certification process—and *only* those exercises—in a master's program is a dangerous application of what we have called a "template" approach. It runs the risk of making the *exercise*, rather than *what the exercise stands for*, the purpose of the process. In other words, it runs the risk of reifying the exercises, making the specific exercises into the "real" standards. Exercises must be seen as what they are—specific opportunities to show evidence of one's practice as an accomplished teacher. Any one assessment or set of assessments is a limited way to gather evidence of the standards as reflected in one's teaching practice. An indispensable principle in the understanding of the Board's assessments—and of any performance assessment design—is that *the standards are always larger than any one demonstration of them.*

We see three problems with the template approach of using the exact exercises provided in the portfolio for a given National Board certificate for work in a master's degree program. First, using those exercises in ways that are not connected to the National Board certification process may not lead the teacher to the goal of the NBPTS standards and processes, specifically the development of reflection, systematic inquiry, and collaboration. A reductionistic approach makes the completion of the exercise into the goal: when the exercises are complete, the work is over. We argue that the goal needs to be the development of the teacher's practice; the teacher's work with any set of exercises then has a larger purpose of advancing the way he or she practices as a teacher.

Second, using exercises from National Board portfolios may not be the appropriate place to start in a master's program. If teacher development is a continuum, then faculty in master's programs would do well to diagnose the current level of development of teachers in such a program as a preliminary step to designing appropriate exercises to lead them to the next stage of their ongoing growth. In fact, the National Board has recognized that not all teachers are ready for the exercises created to assess accomplished teaching. National Board staff currently are developing a series of professional development materials geared to teachers moving toward readiness for the National Board. Similarly, faculty in master's programs could look at the exercises in the National Board portfolios and develop their own unique experiences and assessments to guide teachers in the development of their understanding of content and pedagogy, as well as the development of the critical skills of reflection, systematic inquiry, and collaboration.

If faculty in master's programs work with teachers in a narrow preparation for the National Board portfolio, many teachers will be unlikely

either to do well on the portfolio set in a practice context or to strengthen their practice in their teaching role. Master's faculty need to focus on reflection, systematic inquiry, and collaboration as well as other criteria of high quality master's programs. To do so requires that faculty attend to the developmental stages of the teachers they work with and provide multiple, meaningful opportunities over time for them to demonstrate knowledge, skill, and dispositions for teaching. In that way, faculty not only will offer a master's program that will enable teachers to improve their ongoing teaching practice but also will prepare teachers to do well on the National Board portfolio assessment.

Third, for a master's program to use the exercises from the National Board portfolios as the only exercises diminishes the power of assessment for development of the teacher. The National Board process is designed for a specific purpose: the certification of accomplished teaching. As such, it is a high-stakes, summative assessment. We argue that a degree program—whether master's, bachelor's or doctoral level—should take advantage of the luxury of time to develop and document abilities of teachers longitudinally. Thus, multiple assessments—in different modes and using different methods over time—provide the opportunity to give teachers practice and feedback in their development of knowledge and skill. Assessment used in this manner becomes a powerful, formative tool (Alverno College Faculty, 1994).

For example, suppose a teacher has not yet developed the skill and habit of reflection about practice. Using only the National Board exercises would provide evidence that the teacher's reflection skills are undeveloped, but where does the teacher and her faculty go from there? If, instead, learning experiences were developed in a formative manner (e.g., focusing on the differences between/among descriptive and reflective and analytic writing), the teacher could embark on a process of development that could lead to her becoming effective in using standards to reflect on her practice. Similarly, systematic inquiry is best developed over time, with multiple experiences becoming gradually more complex and demanding; here, again, feedback on earlier performances contributes to success in later performances. Collaboration requires not only time but also a series of good experiences with others; overcoming school cultures that reinforce isolation and individualism does not happen without time and effort. All of this presumes a master's degree program with a unity of purpose reflected in requirements that emerge from the program goals/National Board standards and that is offered over a span of time sufficient to enable teachers to achieve improved practice.

The goal of movement along the continuum from beginning to accomplished teacher is not just passing the National Board assessments. The ultimate goal is to have teachers engage in the ongoing examination and improvement of their practice. What we call benchmarking—the use of National Board standards and processes as a guide to thinking about teaching and learning—provides insights into the best ways to reach that goal.

Authentic Redesign of Programs. We make a link between the benchmark approach to using the standards and processes of the National Board in the design of advanced master's degree programs for practicing teachers and what we call "authentic redesign" of programs. Specifically, we define "authentic redesign" as the willingness to put aside an old program, think about the substance and meaning of an advanced master's degree, and then complete the program design, pulling in the best from the previous endeavor. Thus, neither the old program nor the National Board standards and processes are treated as "templates," to be taken wholly into the design; rather, both are scrutinized in relationship to the purposes and meaning of the program.

Most master's degree programs for teacher education have evolved over time, particularly in institutions that have been at the work for years. Faculty come and go, are hired and retired, and the vast majority of their attention while on faculty is centered either on initial preparation programs or on doctoral work. Only in institutions newer to graduate study (regardless of size) is one likely to discover master's programs that have been designed "from scratch" to meet a particular purpose. However, while redesign is admittedly more difficult than creation of a new program, redesign is the more likely scenario given the constraints placed on institutions of higher education by state governing bodies.

We believe that there are several forces at work supporting the need for the authentic redesign of the master's degree for teachers. First, as NCATE revisits its own standards, the opportunity presents itself for faculty to take a careful, thoughtful and objective look at the master's program as it now stands. NCATE standards remind faculty that one of their basic responsibilities is to address the questions of program quality and coherence. Underlying the topics of quality and coherence are a number of issues. One is relevance to the work of teachers (Blackwell & Diez, 1998). A second is the role of inquiry and research in the program, such as collaboration on projects that emerge from actual problems encountered in the classroom (Blackwell & Diez, 1998). Another is the need for alignment of degree programs with the professional growth continuum of teachers.

Such alignment requires in-depth knowledge and understanding of the continuum; unfortunately, educational research has concentrated more on students than on teachers (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988).

Second, as National Board certification continues to gain momentum, we anticipate that research will emerge that centers on the growth continuum and the role of the National Board certification process in teacher growth. Such research will provide support for the work of faculty in the redesign process and contribute to the ongoing evaluation of the program.

Third, state incentives may provide a powerful pressure for such redesign. In North Carolina, where some initial proposals for master's degrees have failed to obtain state approval, institutions are clearly beginning to recognize that rearranging the current courses will not be sufficient (Feldman, 1999).

What is required for authentic redesign? As we examined the approaches of the institutions described in this paper, several themes related to the six criteria in our first paper emerged. There needs to be some reason to make the change—whether brought on by external pressure or internal initiative. Faculty in a program with a participatory culture will discuss, debate, and compromise, which will lead to a consensus on the goals of such a program as well as to a logical progression of content and courses for the students. Part of the discussion needs to be about faculty roles, such as advisement, team teaching and how to work together programmatically. Ideally, as part of the process, faculty in SCDEs will reflect on their own work and the qualities of their programs through their own research and inquiry. These reflective inquiries will contribute to the continued improvement and relevance of graduate programs.

In addition, a program with a participatory culture will involve other stakeholders beyond the current faculty in the debate, discussion, and consensus process. Representatives of school districts for which the master's program is a source of staff development, and teachers themselves, as the potential students for the programs, should be involved. Mentoring and critical dialogue about the program's curriculum and procedures also emerged as essential aspects of authentic redesign. Faculty from arts and sciences may also have important contributions, especially as the spotlight is focused on content knowledge in teaching.

Coherent requirements, such as admissions, advisement, comprehensives, and culminating experiences designed specifically for the program are also essential for authentic redesign. Our interviews

revealed a focus on issues of the portfolio, which we discuss below. However, most institutions either had not considered admissions and advisement or stated that they "planned to get to it." Very few had systematically approached planning for recruitment, admissions or advisement as a part of the overall program blueprint.

A critical mass of engaged and diverse faculty will enable authentic redesign. We found that in most cases, the efforts underway at the institutions we interviewed were being accomplished by a few faculty (the critical mass), although there were significant exceptions, especially in North Carolina when almost all faculty were engaged. In nearly all other instances, one or two faculty members spearheaded the redesign efforts; sometimes, such efforts were either supported or encouraged by the SCDE dean.

Finally, sufficient resources and institutional support are necessary components that facilitate authentic redesign. In two cases respondents said that the program "is a priority" in their university and that the redesign was precipitated because of that priority status. In almost all cases, respondents reported institutional support, even if not with funding, while one institution reported that they had been given "seed" money for summer planning and development activities.

Faculty with whom we spoke talked about how difficult the process is, even though one commented, "This discussion has been good for us." The key is in how faculty engage in thinking systematically about a program's content, using the National Board standards and processes as a benchmark. (Admittedly, it is faster, easier, and less stressful just to "stuff it in," or to develop a new course related to the National Board, but we are firmly convinced that route will not serve education schools well in the future as they continue to come under scrutiny and attack, nor will it accomplish the goal of a relevant, coherent degree program.) What has occurred in North Carolina, although traumatic for the faculty and institutions involved, may turn out to be an extraordinary event simply because the faculty have no choice but to set aside everything they have done and design a new program. As Baber (1999) commented, the mandate provided the impetus, and the University of North Carolina-Greensboro took the opportunity to implement multiple levels of collaboration, from faculty in Arts and Sciences to National Board Certified teachers, in rethinking seven advanced master's degree programs spanning P-K through secondary education.

The standards and processes of the National Board can serve as the lever for inquiry and reflection about the program and can serve as benchmarks for redesign. The product we seek and advocate through authentic redesign is a degree that is relevant and appropriate to the developmental stage of the teacher and that meets the criteria for high quality master's degrees.

Current Approaches to Linking National Board Standards and Processes with Advanced Master's Degrees

In this section of the paper, we first look at the range of models that emerged in our study of institutions self-identified as having programs that link to the National Board. Then we outline important issues for higher education, including common barriers that affect the ways in which institutions might be able to benchmark their programs to National Board standards and processes. We also consider the roles of states in the current policy climate—roles that vary widely in actions taken in the past two years. Finally, we present a series of stages of development, with concrete examples of how programs have undertaken efforts to design or redesign advanced master's programs benchmarking their efforts to the standards and processes of the National Board.

Range of Models. Among institutions that have identified their programs as linking advanced master's programs to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, we found a range of approaches.

Studying the possibilities. The largest group might be characterized as the "study" group. These institutions are exploring the possibilities of what connections they might make with the National Board's standards and processes, but they either have nothing officially underway or have formed a committee to explore next steps.

Offering a course to support those standing for National Board Certification. In some institutions, the first entrée to looking at the National Board's standards and processes is working with candidates for certification. In some cases, the support option can be taken as a course, but many such programs are offered as stand alone, non-credit service offerings.

Offering a series of courses. Some institutions have created a "strand," "track," or "focus area" within a master's degree program, where six to nine credits of coursework focused on National Board certification can be taken to fulfill some of the requirements for the degree. In most of these cases, there appears to be little or no impact of the National Board-focused

strand on the way the rest of the master's coursework is designed or delivered. However, a few institutions reported that they were rethinking the entire program in addition to adding credits designed for National Board certification, but this appears to be more a course-by-course effort rather than an authentic redesign.

"Plugging" information into otherwise unchanged courses. Several institutions indicated that they were making no substantive changes in their courses at the master's level, but that they had "plugged" or "stuffed" (actual words used by our respondents) or "integrated" either information about the National Board or exercises from the portfolio into already existing courses. This approach is more compatible with the "old view" of master's education, where aspects of the program did not have to be coherent or connected.

Designing a new master's program. In a few cases, institutions noted that they were creating a totally new master's degree program,[1] attempting to create coherence across all courses in a program and using the National Board standards and processes as benchmarks in the process. The impetus for the decision to look at the entire program came either from internal pressure such as enrollment declines or from external sources. For example, one respondent commented that their redesign was due in part to a "business leader who said there was no evidence that the master's in education resulted in better teaching or learning."

Issues for Higher Education

From our interviews with faculty members engaged in work linking National Board standards and processes to programs in higher education, we discovered that many of the concerns expressed in our earlier paper (Blackwell & Diez, 1998) are alive and well. We highlight the most important issues from the interviews here. Our respondents were candid about their states and institutions, and in return, we promised anonymity about their comments regarding the higher education systems and states within which they work.

Isolation and Lack of a Collegial Culture. In our discussions about master's degrees over the past year, we have discovered just how isolated higher education faculty are in their teaching—more so, we think, than K-12 teachers. Faculty are prepared in a higher education system with an

[1] We are not advocating a new degree, which most state governing agencies make extremely difficult. Instead, we are talking about a complete redesign of an existing degree program, which in most cases would require faculty/university curriculum and state approvals. However, when the rationale and justification for the redesign of a program are sound, as in this case, such approvals can be obtained.

ever narrowing specialization as they advance in degree work, focusing on one topic very thoroughly. The result is predictable. Faculty want to teach courses in their specialization and protect their courses, sometimes with a vengeance. Course preparation is a time consuming task, and once complete preparation is done, and a class is successfully taught, faculty are more than reluctant to give it up to begin the creation process anew. As Tom (1999a, in press) states, "...most campus-based teacher educators are comfortable with a course-by-course approach to master's programming because this format is simple to implement, maintains the autonomy of the individual professor, and meshes easily with the highly specialized interests of the typical teacher educator." All of this contributes to the difficulty of change. It is far easier and faster just to think about how to add something into the content of an already taught and approved class. Tom (1997) cautions that teacher educators have become much more adept at responding to new mandates than at creating innovative rethinking of an existing program.

However, the lack of collegial interaction about teaching and curriculum also can lead to loss of coherence in a program. Just as a standard is always larger than any one demonstration of it, so too is a program larger than any one course. If faculty permit themselves to be seduced by the luxury of attending just to their own classes, the end result can be a program that loses its intellectual vitality and purpose, no matter how good each independent course is.

Numbers over Quality. We found that institutions seem to be caught in a "bandwagon" effect to offer assistance for teachers preparing to stand for the National Board.[2] National Board certification is an important goal; it has contributed massively in a short period of time to the profession's improvement of teaching and to the improvement of the initial preparation of teachers. There is, however, a siren song of increased enrollment, in which the result may not be a bona fide academic program but a patchwork master's program where information about the National Board is offered along with a myriad of other loosely related topics. Without attention across the master's curriculum to the essential elements of the National Board process—reflection, systematic inquiry, and collaboration—such efforts may in fact be meaningless; they certainly are not likely to contribute in any significant way to the professional growth of the teacher.

[2] We also hasten to add that this statement is not intended as a criticism of those institutions that have gone out of their way to create support systems for teachers—including all the education schools in New Mexico, which began that effort in the early 1990's. We applaud faculty who have dedicated time and expertise to this endeavor. Our statement is focused on institutions that seem to be heading toward a master's for the purpose of national certification.

Status of the Master's Degree. Harry Judge conducted one of the first critical assessments of graduate programs in education schools in 1982. He noted that SCDEs with doctoral programs tend to concentrate on the doctorate, to the detriment of the master's in those institutions. In our judgment, in SCDEs that are comprehensive (e.g., offer programs through the master's degree), the master's again often ends up shortchanged, with focus on initial preparation of teachers at the undergraduate level. One respondent was remarkably blunt, saying, "The undergraduate program is our bread and butter. The M.A. program is the stepchild in the department. We're having to do damage control about the current program." Now that some institutions are offering the master's for the initial license while some are offering the master's for the first year of induction, and others are limiting the master's to teachers with at least three years of experience, the meaning and purpose of the degree itself has become very unclear.

Judge also took note of the financial and status realities of SCDEs in higher education systems where the preparation of teachers is low priority and low prestige, as did John Goodlad (1990) and others (*What Matters Most*, 1996; Clifford & Guthrie, 1988). Higher education systems expect, if not demand, that education schools earn more than they receive, resulting in underfunded, understaffed, and high enrollment programs, especially at the master's level. That leads to low admissions requirements, which in turn contributes to the low prestige of the education school. Institutions attempting to forge links between their master's degree programs and the National Board must examine their motives for doing so. As one respondent said, "It will bring us status; it's something supported nationally." Another comment was related to "playing the game" of higher education, and, as we noted earlier, motivation becomes intense when enrollments are declining. One issue, we think, is whether the faculty are responding to status and prestige rather than viewing the redesign as an opportunity to respond to professional growth needs of teachers and to contribute to the improvement of practice through a high quality program.

Structural Barriers. Work load and promotion and tenure standards emerged as barriers in some interviews. The labor intensiveness of the redesigned program was mentioned as being unrecognized in the calculation of workload. The teaching load of faculty in most SCDEs is quite high in comparison, say, to that of faculty in colleges of arts and sciences or in schools of management. Added to an escalating need to conduct research in order to obtain tenure or be promoted or to remain on contract in SCDEs without tenure (Blackwell, 1999), it may be astonishing that faculty

are seriously undertaking the effort of redesigning the master's degree. Even in institutions whose mission is primarily teaching, faculty are being pressed to conduct research—often research that is theoretical in nature (Blackwell, 1999).

The absence of meaningful standards for teaching or for faculty development in the academy was also a problem. In many institutions, standard teaching practice may not be congruent with either National Board standards or the goal of developing teachers as professionals. In one program, for example, concern was raised because of a mismatch between the goals of the program and the teaching approaches of some faculty who had not been involved in the design of the program but requested the chance to teach in it. Specifically, a group of master's candidate-teachers who had been involved in active exploration of issues related to practice through problem-based learning action research balked at working with a faculty member whose only style of teaching was lecture and who made no attempt to connect with their experiences as practicing teachers. The faculty members who had designed the program reported being at a loss about how to address the concerns of the teachers, given the lack of agreement institutionally on appropriate teaching in a professional master's program. Another faculty member at a different institution remarked that "staffing will be a real issue—the culture might not change if we don't change the staffing." She elaborated by explaining that the college tends to hire specialists and the new master's needs generalists.

Conceptual Barriers. Assessment, especially in terms of the portfolio, seemed to be used pro forma, because it is a National Board certification requirement. All respondents discussed the notion of portfolio, but not all were able to justify its use in the program, aside from the fact that the National Board uses this assessment technology for certification. A common theme was the use of the portfolio as the culminating product of the master's degree, whether or not the candidate intended to stand for the National Board. One respondent stated the program at his institution offered students the option of developing the portfolio for the purpose of National Board certification. A faculty member in an MAT program that uses the exercises from the National Board portfolio as a final demonstration for its students expressed regret that the students could not immediately submit their portfolios for National Board certification.[3] There seemed to be little awareness of the point of ongoing reflection and systematic inquiry, when the faculty member opined that their students "have to hold on to their portfolios for three years before they can turn them in."

[3] National Board certification requires at least three years of experience in the classroom.

Another respondent talked about how the faculty had "gone round and round" about assessment and had designed six non-sequential classes (inquiry, teaching, student diversity, technology, learning, and curriculum). They finally decided to put assessment and issues of student portfolios in the learning class, but she stressed that assessment is "themed" through all six classes. Yet another institution in the pilot stage indicated that they have "the National Board portfolio as a major component" and have agreed "in principle" to use the portfolio in place of the thesis or in conjunction with the thesis. We found little clarity, however, in explanations of the relative values of thesis and portfolio; in some cases, it was as though the question had not been asked before the decision was made.

Bureaucratic Barriers. Almost every respondent mentioned something about barriers within the higher education system. Internal competition was one barrier. One example was a psychology department disputing the SCDE proposal for a course in learning, demanding that education school students take its course, which is both animal and human learning and highly theoretical, based almost entirely on psychological research studies unrelated to schools. Another mentioned having to overcome the lack of any mechanism in the system for a yearlong course or courses "off schedule" in weeks or times.

The graduate school was frequently mentioned as a "real problem," with many rules and regulations not always appropriate for a professional degree. Graduate school deans and university curriculum approval procedures were also pinpointed as creating problems for the redesign. One respondent mentioned that the "faculty have done the grunt work" of course development, saying that input has been sought from National Board Certified teachers. However, she said, "It's hard to get a syllabus approved through university committees if you say that students have had input into the content of the course." Approvals tend to be glacially slow, with faculty from other units asking predictable questions, and administrators from units such as the computer center or library demanding endless documentation. Several faculty interviewed commented that the university bureaucracy was the "death knell" for any innovative program revision.

The Role of States in the Current Policy Climate

As we noted in the earlier paper (Blackwell & Diez, 1998), state policy strongly influences—for good or ill—the expectations and opportunities for professional development of teachers. With a laudable goal of promoting ongoing professional growth, for example, many states have required

a specific number of credits, e.g., six every five years for maintaining a license. Little attention, however, was paid to how those credits link to a professional development plan; in the press of busy lives, teachers may look for convenience and cost as the major criteria for fulfilling the requirements. And so, an unintended consequence of a well-intentioned requirement has been the proliferation of quick and cheap inservice courses, whose quality and relevance are often questionable. We think of this as a kind of "Horace's Compromise," where states are pleased that they have established "standards" for continuing education and license requirements, institutions of higher education are pleased that they have a guaranteed student enrollment, faculty are pleased that they can teach the same course year after year, and teachers are pleased that they have accessible and often easy courses that fulfill the state requirement. We also note that not all teachers or faculty are satisfied with this compromise and seek review and revision of state policy and higher education's degree programs. In contrast, some state licensure units have "fixed" the problem by eliminating the requirement for a master's degree without addressing their own role in creating the problem.

An alternative, now being moved through the approval process in Wisconsin, would be to require a professional development plan for practicing teachers, bringing together a teacher's individual professional goals with specific areas of focus in his building or district (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1997). The plan might include formal coursework, but could also be designed to incorporate professional reading, conferences, action research projects, study groups, and the like. The struggle, of course, has been to find a mechanism for accountability: who will approve the plan and certify that progress has been made? In Wisconsin, higher education will play a critical role in serving as advisors to teachers in developing their plans—a vital source of opportunity for the continuum of professional development to influence the degree continuum.

At another point in the professional continuum—initial licensure—we see variations in the state policy climate. New York, for example, has recently decided to require a master's degree for *initial* licensure (New York Board of Regents, 1998). California, which had a fifth-year requirement for over 20 years, has recently relaxed the regulation to allow for programs that begin in the undergraduate years. As noted above, the requirement of a master's degree at initial licensure raises questions about the relationship of higher education to the ongoing professional development of the teacher. Will a new category of "advanced master's degree"

become common, just as the Master's of Arts in Teaching did when it was designed by Harvard University in 1936 to go from more teachers to better teachers (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988)?[1] Will teachers who enter the profession with a master's degree seek the doctorate as the next step? Or will university-related professional development be eschewed in favor of professional development provided by districts or private vendors?

North Carolina provides an interesting counterpoint. In recent legislation, the state mandated the development of a new kind of master's degree, which will qualify graduates for the state's new "Master's/Advanced Competencies Certificate." The state spelled out both degree characteristics and a set of competencies that define a "master teacher" and that must be demonstrated to achieve the degree and the certificate. Illustrating the connection of various aspects of North Carolina state policy, the *Excellent Schools Act* not only established new criteria for master's degree study for experienced teachers, but authorized a 10 percent salary increase for teachers who complete the degree and an additional 12 percent increase for teachers who attain National Board certification (Tom, 1999b; Ponder, 1999).

The state, then, may play a critical role in what colleges and universities decide to do with professional development and, specifically, with the design and implementation of master's programs for practicing teachers. That influence was evident in the programs we studied. Not surprisingly, many of the institutions most active in designing new programs that use the National Board standards and processes as benchmarks were in North Carolina.

Stages in the Design of Advanced Master's Programs

We highlight below what we learned in interviews with persons from several institutions about the process of undertaking the design of master's degree programs that use the National Board's standards and processes as benchmarks.

Starting Points. How does a college or university initiate the process of design or redesign of a master's program that uses National Board standards and processes as benchmarks? Four broad starting points emerged in our interviews; two could be classified as triggered by external pressure, one as sparked through institutional initiative, and one began as

[1] What is missing from the equation in 1999 is the interest of foundations, such as the Ford Foundation, which funded the pilot of the MAT at Harvard.

a result of the NCATE/NBPTS Partnership for Graduate Programs Falls Church conference in 1998.

The North Carolina Experience. Both the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina-Greensboro responded to our query with information about how the state mandate led them to undertake a significant design process. Both noted the influence of the *Excellent Schools Act*, which, as a starting point, sunsets all master's programs in teacher education in 2000. The criteria for "program characteristics," the master's/advanced competencies, and the National Board standards and processes were a backdrop for these planning efforts. As Gerald Ponder (1999) commented, the institution must show how the "new" master's builds on INTASC and integrates the National Board standards and processes, leading to the state's advanced competency certification.

There was also a commitment on the part of the two institutions to examine the problems with past approaches to master's level programs for practicing teachers. Alan Tom (1998), who led the planning process for UNC-Chapel Hill, describes the work of the committee in this way:

> Almost from the beginning of the planning process, the committee decided to plan an entirely new degree program; no attempt was made to preserve any of the existing course structure.

Gerald Ponder (1999) discussed the work at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro:

> The master's revision is not voluntary, ... but we intend to make [the master's] as transformative as possible, not just a collection of courses. Based on the Falls Church Conference, I challenged our faculty to make a degree that is truly transformational, not just a credential. They discussed it and have worked on it since then. The conference came at just the right time.

The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Experience. The starting point for the UW-Green Bay design was response to pressure from local districts that wanted support for ongoing teacher development. Francine Tompkins (1999) described the master's as a "completely new program." UW-Green Bay had not had a master's except for cooperative ventures and the MAT. After false starts in revising the latter, the university drew upon community demands to get support from the legislature to pursue the development of the program.

The Alverno College Experience. A private liberal arts college with only undergraduate programs for its first 109 years, Alverno's long-range preparation for the development of a master's is captured in the model of teacher development designed to guide its practice of teacher education in 1984 (Diez, 1990). The master's, begun in 1996, was developed to provide a performance-based alternative for teachers in the Milwaukee area, partially out of response to requests from alumnae and local teachers.

The Illinois State University Experience. The NCATE/NBPTS Partnership for Graduate Programs conference (1998) precipitated the faculty's work in redesign of an existing master's program. Declining enrollments served as the internal impetus, along with strong support from the dean. As Kay Moss (1999) stated, "Tying the master's to the National Board is exactly the right thing to do."

Processes of Design

What are critical aspects of the design process for these new master's degree programs? In every case, we found evidence that an essential process of the National Board's work was replicated—namely, *the involvement of practicing teachers* in the design of the program. At UNC-Chapel Hill, for example, the planning committee comprised faculty from the school of education, along with teachers and administrators nominated by local NEA and AFT groups and the superintendents of four school districts with which the university has a strong working relationship (Tom, 1998). In addition, Tom (1998) indicated the importance of meeting on "neutral" ground—a public library or human service facility. At North Carolina-Greensboro, Ponder (1999) discussed the creation of a cadre of ten National Board Certified teachers who are working with the faculty on the development of the master's program in elementary and middle level education. In addition, Ponder said that the intent is to involve National Board Certified teachers in the future program as both faculty and mentors. In Green Bay, the university committee included teachers and faculty; key sessions were held in the community as well, attended by the provost and chancellor (Tompkins, 1999). Alverno faculty involved three essential groups: teacher education faculty, liberal arts faculty, and experienced teachers from local schools (Diez, 1999).

An important message in our interviews was *how the standards and processes of the National Board were used in the process of design*. Tom (1998), for example, handed out the Board's core propositions and the state competencies but did not focus the work of the group on those documents. Rather, they remained a backdrop for the work and were revisited later as

a way to examine what had been developed. Tompkins (1999), too, saw the board's propositions and standards as "a place to start—a guiding framework and not a template." The UW-Green Bay planning team also looked for what might be missing in the board's materials and added themes of leadership, reform, and systems theory to the mix. Moss of Illinois State (1999) indicated that they view the National Board standards as the "third tier" in their work. As an NCATE-accredited institution, the accreditation standards are the first tier in their planning process. Illinois State is also an INTASC pilot program, developing curricula that meet the INTASC standards in the State of Illinois, which Moss describes as the second tier of standards. The third tier, the National Board, is the "next logical step" to "assure quality teaching at advanced levels." The Alverno framework actually predated the development of the National Board propositions and standards, but faculty used National Board documents as a way to examine and update their conceptual model, using a benchmarking approach (Diez, 1999) that is easily adaptable to other SCDEs.

Specific Elements of Design

Some elements of the design of master's programs that use National Board standards and processes as benchmarks draw upon the key aspects discussed above: reflection, systematic inquiry into practice, and collaboration. Others relate to the integration of content and pedagogy or to the assessment processes used to document development throughout the program as well as successful completion of the outcomes of the program. Still others have more to do with the structure of an academic program, e.g., organization of groups into cohorts, length of courses, etc.

Across our interviews, we saw institutions explicitly attending to reflection and systematic inquiry, asking as did the Green Bay designers (Tompkins, 1999), "What is the knowledge and what are the skills involved in engaging in reflective practice and inquiry?" Reflection has been a central theme of the redesign efforts of Emory University (Cadray, 1999), which has developed a continuum of reflection that models what the university seeks for both students and faculty in their program. The continuum begins with the question, "Are we doing it?" and moves to the next stage of strategic reflection and adaptation to context. The third stage involves communicative reflection: "Can we talk about our own practice in a public forum? And then put what we've learned into practice?" The fourth stage rests upon trust of the participants and results in authentic transformation of the work. Cadray emphasized that faculty involvement

in reflection about the program and their own work allows students to give them feedback and permits the faculty to develop an action plan to respond.

Tom (1998) saw reflection as tightly connected to action research, building links between theory and classroom practice. Ponder (1999) tied the future success of the Greensboro master's "to the extent to which learners take ownership of what they are learning." He stressed that reflection at the end of each semester and the end of the elementary education program is a critical element of the program. The Alverno program uses performance assessment as a significant element in developing reflection, guiding teachers as they learn to stand back from their performance (i.e., writing, planning, or action research) to take stock of their growth and to raise new questions (Diez, 1999).

Collaboration was linked in several programs to the use of cohorts in the design of programs. In UNC-Chapel Hill's plan for a new master's program, teachers will experience varied group structures: 1) large groups of perhaps 100 admitted at the same time, who attend some sessions together, 2) cohorts of 25 who share a common goal or perspective (e.g., middle level teaching), and 3) study groups of four to six teachers whose action research focus is similar (Tom, 1999b). The University of North Carolina-Greensboro (Baber, 1999) collaborated with National Board Certified teachers as well as master teachers representing subject areas and faculty from the Arts and Sciences. Green Bay initiated the program with ten students in fall 1998, and is drawing upon these students for input for the ongoing design of the program (Tompkins, 1999). Because Alverno serves a wide range of students in urban Milwaukee, faculty did not develop a cohort requirement; their courses, however, consciously develop students' collaboration abilities through focused group projects (Diez, 1999). Other universities, such as Illinois State and UNC-Greensboro, find the cohort approach problematic, as their systems presume a non-cohort group or part-time study for teachers on campus, although cohorts are used off-campus in both instances.

With large numbers anticipated in the program, UNC-Chapel Hill has developed a plan for addressing content areas and content-specific pedagogy through various groupings within courses (Tom, 1999b). At both UW-Green Bay and Alverno College, with small groups of teachers, content area focus is linked to the specifics of projects within courses and to action research questions (Tompkins, 1999; Diez, 1999). In contrast, two programs at California State University-Northridge were designed specifically to serve the needs of secondary English and mathematics teachers. In

these programs, the curriculum maintains a focus on the teacher's content area across courses (Sato, 1999; Huetinck, 1999). Illinois State has deliberately left a specific number of hours in their program for content areas (Moss, 1999).

Most programs are at the beginning stages of assessment design for evaluating performance in the program. UW-Green Bay involves the students in developing criteria and rubrics for writing assignments; they plan to use portfolio assessment, but describe themselves as "still asking what kind of evidence the portfolio will need to include" (Tompkins, 1999). UNC-Chapel Hill's design incorporates a presentation by each participant at a final exhibition/conference, but there is little indication yet of the design of in-process assessment methods. Emory University is working toward making the portfolio "more than a scrapbook," using a book by Dorothy Campbell *et al.* (1997) that "actually shows students the rationale for placing artifacts under certain standards."

Alverno's design draws upon the college's 26 years of practice with performance assessment in higher education. Each course specifies the links between course goals and the model of teacher development; faculty specify criteria for in-class assessments. A series of external assessments provides data on student growth through the program; some of these external assessments are completed through the college's assessment center. The final external assessment is the development of a conference at which students present their action research projects and engage their audience in professional discourse (Diez, 1999).

A hallmark of these programs is the "wholeness" of the design—relationships between courses across the program create coherence and connectedness *by design*. UNC-Chapel Hill, UW-Green Bay and Emory programs are designed to run during a two-year period. Like UW-Green Bay, where the "core is interwoven" (Tompkins, 1999), Alverno's program extends the core across the program, explicitly making links to students' specialization courses (Diez, 1999). Similarly, Illinois State bases the entire master's on the five core propositions of the National Board (Moss, 1999). Several programs (Emory, UCLA, Illinois State, and Arkansas) are considering or have developed mentoring endeavors as well as capstone experiences that bring together the work of the entire program during the final semester.

Timeframe is an element addressed in various ways. The UNC-Chapel Hill proposal includes summer sessions of full days (except Wednesdays) for four weeks and a school year session of eight full days

(once a month—four Mondays and four Saturdays) with another sixteen three-hour sessions after school in study groups (Tom, 1999b). Alverno's program meets as part of Weekend College—classes can be scheduled for four-hour periods either Friday evening, Saturday morning, or Saturday afternoon; classes meet eight times. Summer session classes meet for a similar total time, but use day and evening time frames.

Faculty and Faculty Development

Colleges and universities must address a number of issues related to faculty and faculty development during the redesign process. To what degree will faculty across the institution be involved in the program? How will adjunct faculty, and especially appropriately qualified practicing K-12 teachers, be incorporated into the faculty? What faculty development issues need to be addressed in working with practicing professional teachers?

Alverno, building not only on its strong undergraduate teacher education program but also on the college's focus on teaching, learning, and assessment across disciplines, chose to involve liberal arts faculty along with teacher educators from the college and the community as faculty (Diez, 1999). Like Alverno, UW-Green Bay chose not to create an exclusive graduate faculty, but to assign faculty at both undergraduate and graduate levels and to involve local teachers as well (Tompkins, 1999). UNC-Chapel Hill is planning to develop instructional teams that will include university faculty and K-12 teachers (who will eventually be graduates of the program), in order to provide an added impetus for them to continue to group (Tom, 1998).

Our interviewees made clear that faculty involvement in planning is an important step in developing faculty for new master's degree programs. At UW-Green Bay, the seven faculty members primarily responsible for the program meet two to three times a month in development of the curriculum; other faculty are also invited to participate. When these seven faculty attended the first class session in the fall 1998, they came prepared to discuss the readings and participated in reflection with the students (Tompkins, 1999).

Implementation

UW-Green Bay began its new master's program in fall 1998, with ten students. The group was kept small so that students could be actively involved in refining the plan for the degree; the program will select a

group of 20 students in fall 1999. Administrative support for the program has been strong, including resources to attend conferences, hire consultants, and host work sessions with community and school leaders. Another measure of active support is unusual at Green Bay—approval for the program by the Faculty Senate and Board of Regents was achieved in less than a year (Tompkins, 1999). A strategy employed by at least two institutions was to use the names of courses already on the books, but to recreate the meaning of those courses in a new design.

Evaluation

Among the institutions we interviewed, only Alverno's master's program had completed a program evaluation (Diez & Sharkey, 1998). With the graduation of the first two groups of students, in May and August, 1998, an evaluation subcommittee of the MA planning committee conducted focus groups of the graduates and held evaluation sessions among faculty who teach in the program. The data from those groups were used to assess the program's performance in relationship to criteria set forth by Haworth and Conrad (1997). The evaluation provided clear affirmation of several of the goals of the program:

> Students in the Master of Arts in Education at Alverno develop and change as professional practitioners, specifically in their ability to use theory, applying it appropriately in their work settings; sense of professional efficacy, seeing themselves as change agents who are able to analyze situations and take action for the common good; and action research abilities, raising questions and designing inquiry in order to improve their practice.

The evaluation also highlighted areas to address in improving the program, including examining how to assist students to make more effective connections with technology resources, reviewing the infusion of multicultural issues across the curriculum, and developing ways to maintain networking connections among alumni (Diez & Sharkey, 1998).

Evaluation, while premature for some programs still in the design phase, provides critical input for the continuous improvement of master's programs. The "old view" is that the program simply exists. The "new view," benchmarking to the processes of the National Board, calls for institutions to examine their practice and make changes on an ongoing basis. As one respondent put it, "The only thing standing in our way is us."

Implications and Questions

We end this paper, as we did the previous one, with a set of issues that we did not have space to address fully or that arise from looking over the interviews that we conducted with institutions seeking a link with National Board standards and processes.

1. Advanced master's degrees for teachers are one way to align the continuum of professional degrees with the continuum of teacher development. What are the implications in taking teacher professional development seriously for the conduct of other college/university-based professional development programs? For non-college/university-based professional development programs?

2. The policy climate in North Carolina clearly supports the development of advanced master's degrees, benchmarked to National Board standards and processes, for practicing teachers. In the absence of such a policy climate, how might institutions best approach the design of such programs and assure their implementation?

3. Of all of the processes of the National Board that can be drawn upon by designers of advanced master's programs, assessment may be the most important; yet it is the least well thought through in the current designs. Most institutions are either taking the specific tasks of National Board assessments or leaving all assessment to a portfolio or exhibition at the end of the degree program. How might institutions best use principles of assessment design across courses and experiences in new advanced master's programs?

4. An emerging issue much discussed at the state and national policy levels and in National Board meetings, is the link between teacher quality and K-12 student achievement. How might the design of new master's programs make this link explicit, particularly in assessment designs and in the evaluation process?

5. In almost all the interviews we conducted, difficulties with faculty and university bureaucracy, as well as the difficulty of change, were discussed as barriers to reform of the master's degree program. What strategies might faculty develop to make the process both more efficient and effective?

6. Multiple applications of the master's degree continued to emerge in the interviews, from the use of the master's for initial license or prepara-

tion for National Board certification through advanced preparation to improve teaching practice. What options might faculty develop to address the resulting dilemma?

Conclusion

We were both intrigued and concerned by the failure in some respects of those we interviewed to distinguish between "template" and "benchmark" approaches. We were also troubled by reports of using the master's for the purpose of guiding teachers through National Board certification. Several interviewees seemed to miss essential points of the National Board standards and processes, and did not seem to understand the larger principle of the point of the endeavor—engaging in ongoing examination of practice that leads to improvement.

We hypothesize that this is due, at least in part, to the lack of a readily available literature about innovative master's degree programs. In one interview, the respondent said what is badly needed is an annotated bibliography tying issues of redesign to National Board standards. A recent paper by Tom (1999a, in press) laments the lack of literature on pilot or experimental efforts, saying "The paucity of the research literature on innovative programs is a major barrier to the overall reform of master's degree study for experienced teachers."

In contrast, we were encouraged by the number of respondents who reported examination of faculty roles including teaching in interdisciplinary programs, team teaching, and working together collegially with faculty who, while not directly involved in the redesign, serve as sounding boards for their colleagues. We also found the scope and depth of programmatic thinking in several of these institutions to be quite promising, both as related to National Board standards and as examples of the criteria for high quality programs.

As we talked with faculty who are engaged in thinking about the new vision of master's education, we discovered a keen interest—a quest for information—about what others are doing, to the extent that our interviews at times evolved into sharing and conversations. Several respondents commented that the NCATE/NBPTS Falls Church conference in April 1998 had caused them to begin, or had assisted them in, the review of the master's program. Our conversations with a wide variety of institutions convinced us that redesign of the master's for experienced teachers is the right thing to do. We are also convinced that the kinds of conversations held at a national conference focused on the redesign of master's

programs for professional practitioners are a powerful support to local action. There will be difficulties along the way, from faculty interests and turf to state and university procedures and policies that impede the progress. Nonetheless, alignment of the master's with the standards and processes of the National Board, while striving to meet criteria for high quality master's degree programs, holds the promise of improved teaching practice.

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Interviews

1) Ceola Ross Baber, University of North Carolina-Greensboro, May 24, 1999.

2) Joseph P. Cadray, Emory University, January 25, 1999.

3) Mary Diez, Alverno College, February 15, 1999.

4) Annette Digby, University of Arkansas, December 8, 1998.

5) Marilyn D. Foxworth, University of Southern Mississippi, December 14, 1998.

6) Linda Huetinck, California State University-Northridge, December 1, 1998.

7) Kay Moss, Illinois State University, January 5, 1999.

8) Gerald Ponder, University of North Carolina-Greensboro, February 10, 1999.

9) Kyoko Sato, California State University-Northridge, December 15, 1998.

10) Francine Tompkins, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, January 5, 1999.

11) Alan Tom, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, December 9, 1998.

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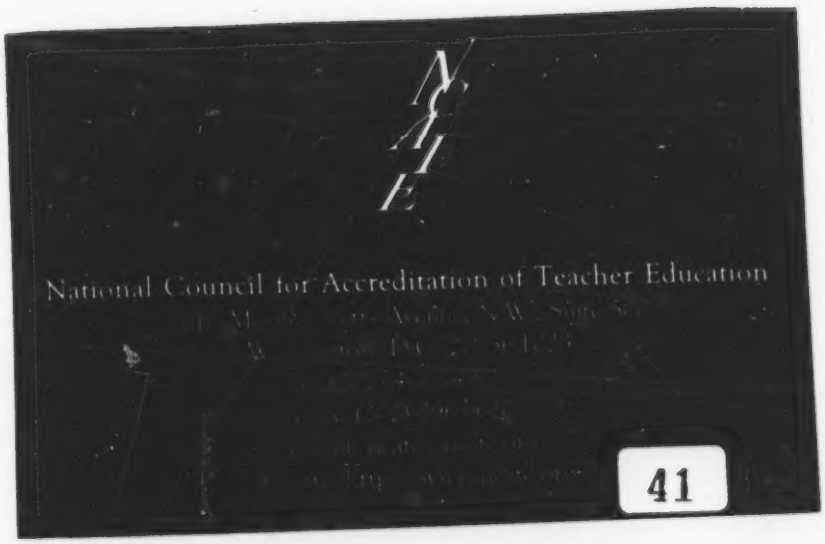

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